



Bernard C. "Jack" Young
Mayor

COMMISSION FOR HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL PRESERVATION

Tom Liebel, *Chairman*



Chris Ryer
Director

DRAFT STAFF REPORT

October 13, 2020

REQUEST: 3100 Greenmount Avenue – Waverly Town Hall (Baltimore City Landmark):
Comprehensive Exterior Rehabilitation

RECOMMENDATION: Approval, with final details to be approved at staff level

STAFF: Lauren Schiszik

APPLICANT: Charles Belfoure, consultant

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

This property is located at the northwest corner of the intersection of Greenmount Avenue and 31st Street in the Waverly neighborhood. (*Map 1 and 2*). The Waverly Town Hall was constructed circa 1873 to serve as a public hall for the Waverly community (originally named Huntington) in what was then Baltimore County (*Map 3 and 4*). It was in a prime location in the village, which was situated along two transportation routes. The town hall was located a block north of the tollhouse along York Rd. as well as the North Baltimore Railroad Depot. The building served as a community meeting place, a center of commerce, a social hub, and a post office for the Waverly Community in the late 19th and 20th centuries. The Waverly Town Hall was a hub for civic engagement, drawing the City's leading political figures and hosting debates over significant issues facing the Waverly community and the surrounding area. Today, the Waverly Town Hall is relatively rare 19th century building along the commercial strip of Greenmount Avenue, where the majority of the structures, particularly along this block, date to the early- to mid- 20th century.

Site Conditions/Architectural Description: The Waverly Town Hall is a late 19th century Classical Revival style side-gabled brick building. When it was originally constructed, it was an impressive structure; but many alterations have removed character-defining features, such as the cupola, large second story windows, the original storefront (*Image 1 and 2*). Some features do remain, such as the bracketed cornice and pediment on the façade, and the overall form is unaltered. However, there are non-contributing one-story projecting storefronts on the façade of the Hall, which were likely constructed around the mid-20th century. These storefront additions are largely clad with vertical wood siding. New window openings were introduced on the upper stories of the south and north elevations (*Image 4, 5, and 6*). A late 19th/early 20th century storefront on the south elevation facing 31st Street retains historic decorative details and windows (*Image 7 and 8*).

Two 20th century additions, which read as separate buildings, abut the Waverly Town Hall. The first addition was constructed in the 1930s and is a simple Moderne style brown brick 3-bay wide, one-story plus basement, flat-roofed structure located on the rear of the Hall, facing 31st Street (*Map 5 and Images 9, 10, 11*). It retains its original window and door openings, and some historic transom windows. By the middle of the 20th century, a second one-story, flat-roofed addition was constructed on the north side of the Town Hall, with a storefront facing Greenmount Avenue, which is clad with brick and has a roll-down metal door that covers the majority of the elevation (*Map 6 and Image 12*).

BACKGROUND

- The Waverly Town Hall was designated as a Baltimore City Landmark in 2011.
- There have been no previous applications for this property.

PROPOSAL & APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

The applicant proposes to complete a comprehensive rehabilitation of the structure and its additions. For the original Waverly Town Hall, the scope of work entails the following: repair or replacement in kind of historic features, such as the cornice, internal gutters, etc., cleaning of brick elevations, repointing as needed. More major work includes the removal of a non-contributing one story storefront addition that is located on the façade of the Hall and wraps around to the south elevation on 31st St. In its place, the circa 1873 storefront, main entrance, and large 2nd floor windows on the façade will be reconstructed. Brick infilling the former large window openings on the 2nd floor of the façade, and another window opening on the 31st St. elevation will be removed, and these window openings will be restored with wood windows that will replicate the original windows in dimensions and details, including muntins, trim, and window hoods. On the side elevation, the existing late 19th/early 20th century storefront openings, doorways, and intermediary cornice will be retained and restored.

The early 20th century addition facing 31st Street will be rehabilitated, with repairs and replacements of missing materials made in kind. The façade of the non-contributing mid-twentieth century storefront addition facing Greenmount Ave. will be removed. The façade of this addition will be pulled back to the same plane as that of the original Hall, and a new storefront will be installed, which will be compatible with the restored Hall storefront.

The proposed alterations are being considered under the Baltimore City Historic Preservation Design Guidelines *Chapter 1: Design Guidelines for Building Exteriors*, Sections 1.1, 1.3, 1.6, 1.7, 1.10, 1.16, and 1.18.

Conformity to Guidelines

Section 1.1 Identifying and Preserving Historic Building Fabric:

- Identify and assess character-defining features when considering changes to a historic building. Retain character-defining features, such as roof shape, openings for doors and windows, and unique detailing, when repairing, maintaining, or altering a historic building.

- Replace architectural materials and features that are deteriorated beyond repair with new materials and features that visually match the original.
- Replace missing architectural features with new features that visually match the original. Base the fabrication of the new features on matching identical features from the building. Where identical features are not present, base the fabrication on historic drawings, photographic evidence, or comparable examples found on historic buildings in the neighborhood.
- Many changes to a building over time may be historically significant and should not be removed. Intrusive changes that have resulted in harm to historic building fabric or in the loss of historical significance and integrity may be reversed as part of a rehabilitation project.
 - The proposal meets all of these guidelines.

Section 1.3 Wood:

- Repair wood features using recognized wood preservation techniques, such as patching with appropriate patching materials, piecing-in, and consolidation methods.
- In most cases only replace wood features that are deteriorated beyond repair.
- Photograph architectural features that are slated for replacement prior to their removal.
- Use historic documentation, physical evidence including comparable examples in the neighborhood, or photographs to accurately replicate missing features. If such documentation is not available, use a contemporary design compatible with the size, scale, and material of the historic building.
- When in-kind replacement is not possible, an alternative material may be considered if it is approved by the Commission.
 - The proposal meets all of these guidelines.

Section 1.5 Alternative Materials:

- Where a historic feature is entirely missing or where replacement has been approved by the Commission, a visually and physically compatible alternative material may be used, if approved by the Commission. Replicate elements in size, form, shape, texture, and appearance of the historic feature.
 - The applicant proposes to use smooth cementitious panels for the storefronts and AZEK (a polyvinyl chloride product) to replicate the missing Italianate hoods over the windows on the second story of the façade. Smooth textured cementitious panels are a common alternative material for wood paneling. AZEK is an appropriate replacement product for replacing ornate features that are completely missing, provided that the AZEK is painted and will be mounted higher than the first floor.

Section 1.6.1 Doors - General:

- Use historical documentation when reconstructing a missing door feature. If there is not sufficient evidence available, a new design must be compatible with the architectural character of the building.
 - The proposal meets this guideline.

Section 1.7.1 Windows - General:

- Use physical, photographic or historical evidence to reconstruct missing window elements, such as architraves, hoodmolds, sash, sills, and interior or exterior shutters and blinds. Reconstruct elements with materials to match the original or, if that is not possible, with a compatible substitute material.
 - The proposal meets this guideline.

Section 1.7.3 Window Replacement:

- Replacement windows shall match the historic windows in size, type, configuration, form, detail, and overall appearance.
- Replicating the material of historic windows is always appropriate. Replacement windows in an alternative material may be considered if it adequately replicates the overall size, glazing, operation, finish, exterior profiles, and arrangement of the historic window.
- Replacement windows must fit properly within the original opening, and replicate the dimensions and profiles of the sash, frames and muntins. Do not reduce the size or change the shape of historic windows or window openings.
 - The proposal meets all of these guidelines.

Section 1.10.3 Masonry Painting:

- Repaint previously painted masonry to match the existing color or choose a new, historically appropriate color.
 - The proposal meets this guideline.

Section 1.16 Accessibility:

- Provide barrier-free access at historic buildings and sites to the highest degree possible while preserving historic features and fabric.
- Design barrier-free access as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act and state and local codes.
- Design barrier-free access to be compatible with the historic character of the building in materials, proportions, and detailing.
 - The proposal meets these guidelines with the addition of an accessible ramp on the 31st St. elevation of the building.

Section 1.18: Alterations and Additions:

- Retain historic character defining features when planning alterations and additions to a historic building.
- Design alterations and additions to be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the historic building.
- Document existing historic conditions in drawings and photographs before beginning any alterations and additions.
 - The proposal meets these guidelines.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The Waverly Town Hall is not located within a CHAP district; therefore, comments from an Architectural Review Committee are not applicable. However, the surrounding community associations and organizations were notified of this project and hearing: Charles Village Community Benefits District, Waverly Main Street, Better Waverly Community Association, and the Oakenshawe Community Association. Staff received a letter of support from Michael Franch, ARC Chair of the Waverly local historic district.

ANALYSIS

CHAP staff has reviewed the submission and finds that the proposal meets CHAP guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval, with final details to be approved at staff level.



Eric Holcomb
Executive Director

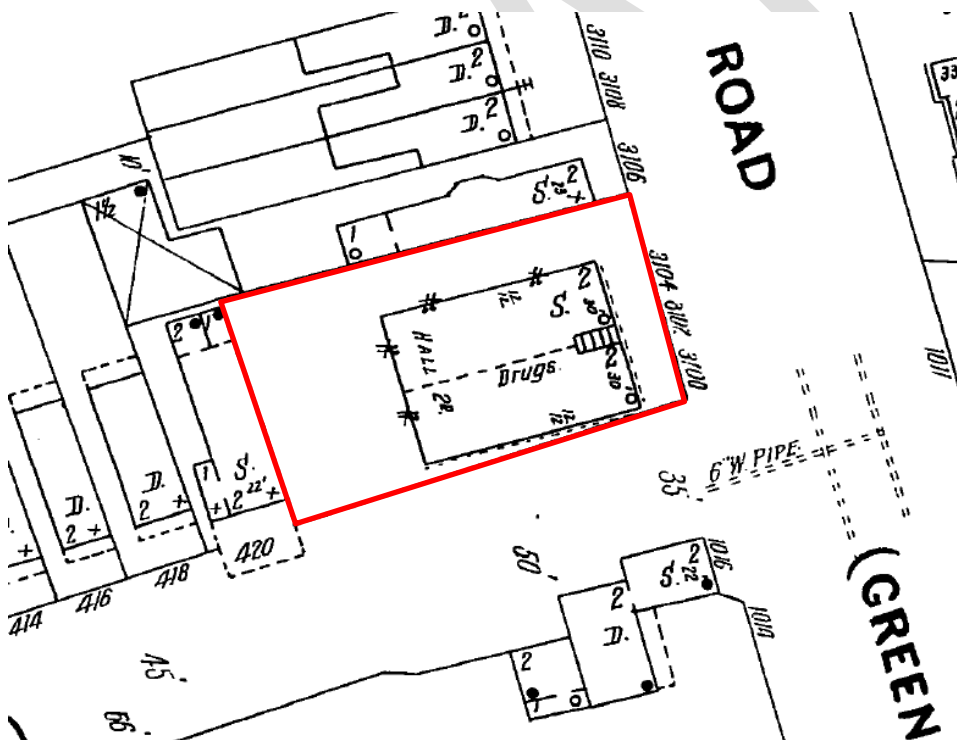
MAPS AND IMAGES

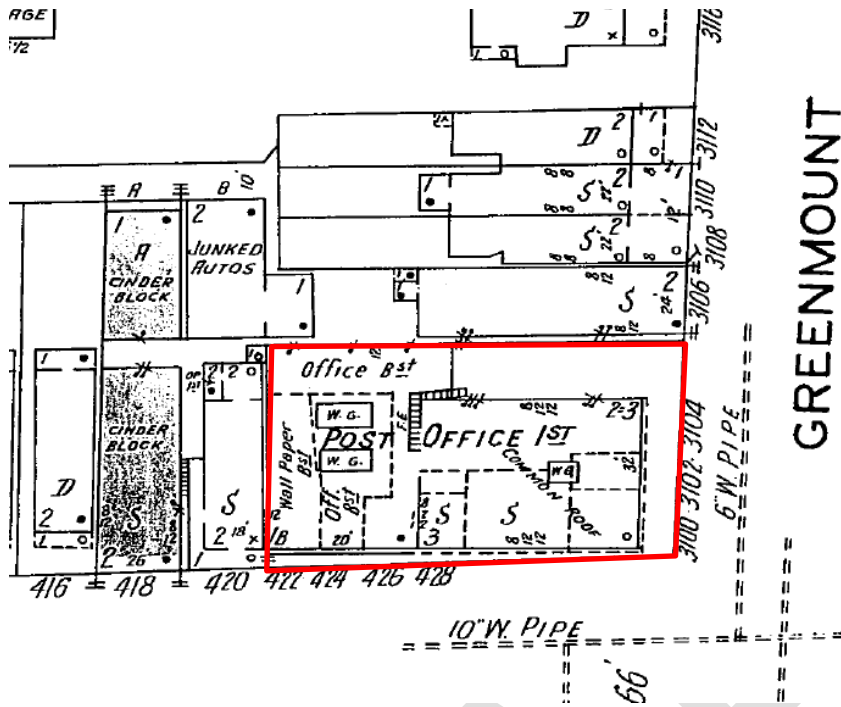


Map 1: Location of Waverly Town Hall, 3100 Greenmount Ave., marked with red star.

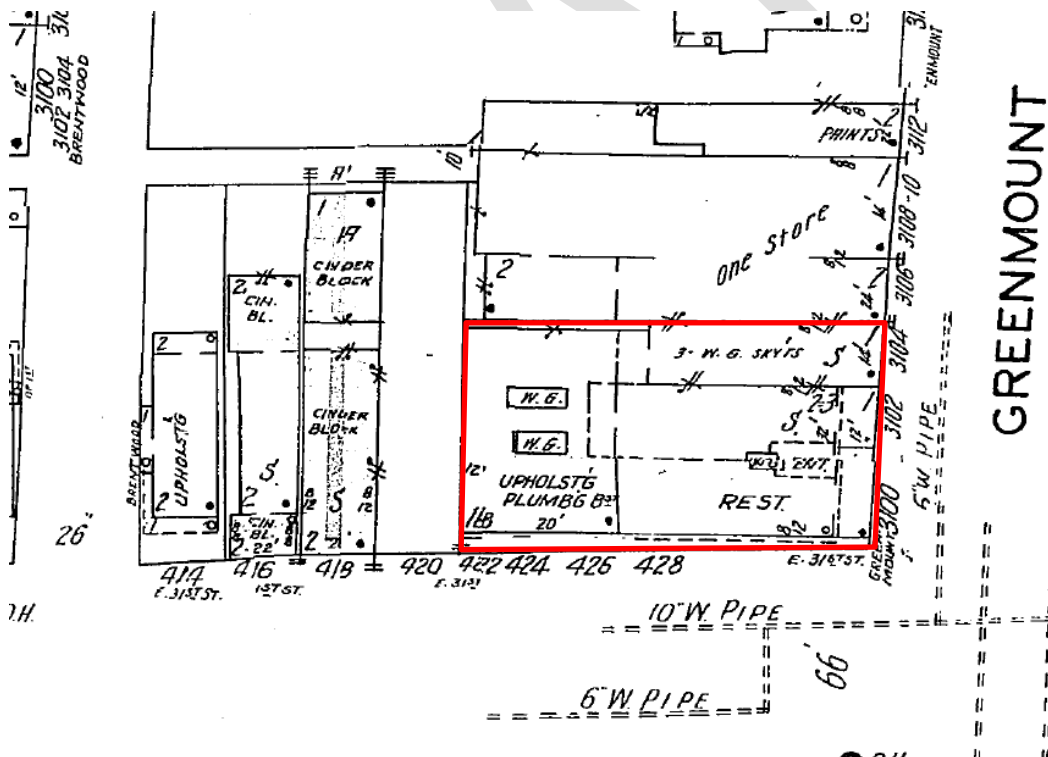


Map 2: Detailed location map of the Waverly Town Hall, with the property outlined in red.





Map 5: 1936 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map; a one story addition was constructed on the west elevation, fronting on 31st Street.



Map 6: 1951 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, depicting a new one story addition on the north portion of the parcel, as well as one story addition on the façade of the Waverly Town Hall.

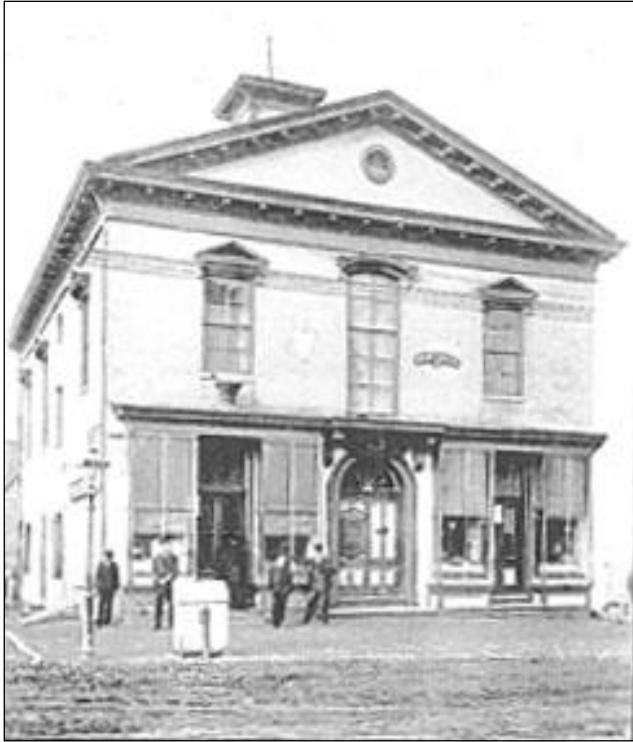


Image 1: Waverly Town Hall in 1873; this photograph is being used to inform the restoration of historic features



Image 2: View of the west side of York Road in 1903; there is a large frame porch on the façade of the Waverly Town Hall.



Image 3: Aerial photo of the building; outlined in red. December 2019



Image 4: Façade of the Waverly Town Hall with non-contributing storefronts, including the Quik Tax Service building. On the second floor, ghosting is seen where the larger original windows were located.



Image 5: Façade of the Waverly Town Hall; the north elevation is also visible.



Image 6: South elevation of the Waverly Town Hall, facing on 31st St.



Image 7: Historic details of the storefront include the decorative rope and floral decorative details around this doorframe, and the ghost sign stating “Prescriptions” where the wooden cornice was removed.



Image 8: Historic window detail and trim on the storefront on the south elevation facing 31st St.



Image 9: The early 20th century addition on the west elevation of the Hall, facing 31st St. It retains some original historic details, such as the transom windows, and all original openings.



Image 10: Another view of the early 20th-century addition facing 31st St.



Image 11: The basement level of the early 20th-century addition.



Image 12: The non-historic mid-20th century storefront addition on the north side of the Hall.